The Indian diamond industry uses advanced technology to remain competitive.

Lichee export

†735. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of Lichee exported from India and the extent of foreign exchange earned thereby;

(b) whether Lichee is also exported from Uttaranchal;

(c) if so, whether the State Government is being provided with the assistance to increase the production of exportable Lichee in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) The quantity and value of Lichee exported from India during the year 2002-03 (April to December) has been 33.61 MTs and Rs. 97.51 lakhs respectively.

(Source : DGC & IS)

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) An Agri Export Zone for Lichees has been set up in Uttaranchal. Under this, various schemes of the Government are dovetailed in the area. A comprehensive package of services including training, dissemination of technical knowledge on adoption of pre and post harvest practices by farmers etc. are being provided. Further, entrepreneurs are being encouraged to set up integrated packhouses for procuring of Lichees. Transport assistance is also being provided for undertaking exports.

Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme

736. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives of the Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme (DEPB);

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the amount of custom duty neutralized after introduction of DEPB during the last year and till date in the current year;

(c) whether norms pertaining to import of raw material through DEPB have been relaxed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The objective of Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme is to neutralise the incidence of Customs Duty on the import content of the export product. As per the data available with Ministry of Finance, the total amount of Customs Duty neutralised during financial year, 2002-03 was Rs. 6831 crores. The amount of Customs Duty neutralised during April, 2003 was Rs. 952 crore. The credit under DEPB may be utilised for payment of Customs Duty on any items which is freely importable except capital goods.

Indo-UK trade meet

737. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the achievements of the Indo-UK trade meet; and

(b) whether proposals of the previous round have been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Matters of bilateral trade and economic interest/concerns of the two countries were discussed in a meeting between the Commerce and Industry Minister and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry of UK in May, 2003.

Such interactions are expected to promote trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.